DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 442 757 SP 039 283

AUTHOR	Hamilton, David; Zufiaurre, Benjamin
TITLE	The New Pedagogics: Revisiting Curriculum and Didactics.
PUB DATE	2000-04-28
NOTE	9p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (New Orleans, LA, April 24-28, 2000).
PUB TYPE	Opinion Papers (120) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Curriculum; *Didacticism; Elementary Secondary Education; Foreign Countries; Higher Educatiqn; *Instruction
IDENTIFIERS	Europe; Spain

ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on curriculum and didactics, working from the premise that the European discourse of didactics is close to the emergent Anglo-American discourse of pedagogics. The paper begins with an argument about the convergence of didactic and pedagogical theory. It illustrates the endurance of European didactic thought, using examples from Spain. Five sections focus on: why didactics is not popular in the United Kingdom and United States; the overlap between pedagogy (as upbringing) and didactics (as schooling); the discourse of didactic thinking and applications in Spain; didaktika magna to applied didactics; and epistemological evolution in didactic analysis. The paper concludes that the recent history of didactic and pedagogic thought in Europe and North America is neither simple nor linear. Semantic, geographical, historical, political, and confessional differences are involved. The overall conclusion is that neither field is static, and there is no point in searching for the true pedagogics of didactics. It is better to understand them in their historical, geographical, and political contexts. (Contains 27 references.) (SM)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

The new pedagogics: revisiting curriculum and didactics[1]

D. Hamilton

David Hamilton, Umeå University, Sweden
(david.hamilton@pedag.umu.se)

&

Benjamin Zufiaurre, Public University of Navarra, Pamplona, Spain
(zufiaurre@si.unavarra.es)

ED 442 757

The paper extends the 'curriculum and/or didactics' theme that has been pursued in recent AERA conventions. Its intentions are interpretative; and it is based on the presentation and analysis of European and US sources. The paper is in two parts, and starts from the premise that the European discourse of didactics is close to the emergent Anglo-American discourse of pedagogics. The first part comprises an argument about the convergence of didactic and pedagogic theory; and the second part illustrates the endurance of European didactic thought with the aid of Spanish examples.

Th November 1999 newsletter of the Scottish Educational Research Association had the headline: 'Pedagogy the common language in Europe… ' The associated article was a report on the opening address to the Association's annual conference. The speaker, a senior administrator in the Scottish School system, had made reference to the 'huge gaps' that exist between providers and researchers in Scotland, which had left a 'defensive' and 'anti-intellectual' educational climate in Scotland - a 'siege mentality' which might lead to the 'collective atrophy' of its provider institutions[2].

In fact, the speaker's conclusions were less pessimistic than the headline. The newsletter's editor had chosen to lead with some 'bad news'. The speaker's conclusion, therefore, was more optimistic. Schools and local authorities had, he felt, come closer in their view of educational research - and that through reflection on pedagogic questions this convergence would yield further benefits.

But is pedagogy a common language in Europe? What place, for instance, is taken by the parallel term didactics? At the heart of these discussions is a problem that can be raised via the following paradox: If German discussions of teaching and learning in the nineteenth century made reference to both pedagogics and didactics (e.g. in the work of Herbart and the herbartians, see Westbury, Hopmann & Riquarts, 1999), why is it that pedagogics rather than

---

[1] Round table presentation at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association , New Orleans, April 24-28, 2000.

[2] In March 2000, the Scottish Executive (cf. government) decided to end its financial support for the publicly-funded Scottish Council for Research in Education (founded 1928).

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

SP039283

didactics survived (or reappeared) in the Anglo-American educational lexicon; and why, by contrast, has didactics survived so strongly in mainland Europe?

Why no Didactics?

When asked 'why no didactics in the UK or the USA?', the most likely response from an Anglo-American educationist will be through reference to the negative associations that can be found in the Oxford English Dictionary; namely, that didactics carries connotations of 'dogma' and 'dullness'. This reason is plausible, but it might also be applied to pedagogics, with its association with pederasty and pedophilia.

I think, fortunately, there may be a third explanation - in the transformations the German didactics underwent as it was exported to the US and the United Kingdom. This export can be seen in the notion of 'curriculum and instruction' that still survives in the US (e.g. University of Wisconsin, Madison). The 'instruction' in this title is all that remains of the Herbartian heritage in the US. Instruction, that is, resonates with the negative connotations of didactics identified above (viz. good teachers are not didactic, nor do they instruct).

In this translation of didactics as instruction, however, something else was lost. The notion of instruction became linked to the notion, as Westbury suggests, of 'curriculum-as-manual'; something:

> Containing the templates for coverage and methods that are seen as guiding, directing or controlling a school's, or a school system's, day-by-day classroom work....What is essential is the idea that public control of the schools means that, whatever the character of the curriculum that is developed for a school or a school system, teachers as employees of the school system have been, and are, expected to 'implement' their system's curricula...just as a system's business official are expected to implement a system's accounting procedures or pilots are expected to follow their airline's rules governing what they should do. (1999, p. 17)

By contrast, German didactics was not based on a curriculum, rather it was based on a Lehrplan and a Lehrart. Together, these are neither templates nor methods. Rather, they relate more to the principles than to the practice of schooling. They identify the assumptions and values that frame curriculum planning and, therefore, the activities of schooling. As Westbury indicates, didactics is a form of analysis, a 'system for thinking about the problems of the curriculum'. It is 'not centred on the task of direction and managing the work of systems of school'. Nor does it focus on 'selecting a curriculum for this school or this district' (p. 17).

In turn, Westbury links the German view of teaching and curriculum to a 'reflective [or deliberative] practice of teaching' (p. 17), such that:

> The state curriculum, the *Lehrplan*, does lay out prescribed content for teaching; but, this content is understood as an authoritative selection from cultural traditions that can only become educative as it is interpreted and given life by teachers - who are seen, in their turn, as normatively directed by the elusive concept of *Bildung*, or formation, and by the ways of thinking found in the 'art' of didaktik. (p. 17)

This conception of didactics flourished in the rest of Europe after the Enlightenment. It was an idealist (or neo-platonic) conception. Educationists, who could be ranked along a

continuum from 'educationist-as-Baumeister (architect)' to 'educationist-as-Handwerker (classroom teacher)' (Hamilton, 1999, see also Gundem, 1998) worked to a common set of ideas that existed, as Westbury suggests, within 'cultural traditions'. Thus, teachers who work within a didactic frame, self-consciously work to a Lehrplan and to a set of educational ideals regarding the purposes of education and schooling. In turn, this framework and these ideals inform their Lehrart.

Incidentally, Westbury (following Doyle) also suggests that curriculum theory operates at 'two distinct levels of schooling': the policy level and the classroom level (p. 33). He suggests that there has been a disjunction between these two levels, that the 'classroom curriculum' has been 'neglected' in American writing and thinking about curriculum' (p. 35). In short, US curriculum theory operates with - or has operated with - a double discourse which, in the revisionist view of Westbury and others, should be translated into a continuum (cf. from Baumeister to Handwerker) that embraces curriculum-as-plan and pedagogy-as-praxis, and which unites these activities through interpretation, reflection, and deliberation.

From Didactics to Pedagogics

But what about the resolution of pedagogics and didactics in Europe. In the classic (and classical) sense, pedagogics is about nurture and upbringing - as evidenced, for instance, in the references to 'nurture' and the 'tending and feeding of children' that were used by Immanuel Kant in his Über Pedagogik (1803, English edition), and in the associated comment that appears in Paul Monroe's Cyclopaedia of Education (1913):

> The philosopher Kant denominated his lectures on education as Über Pädagogik. They dealt especially with the formation of habit, and moral training and instruction. Thus defined, pedagogy concerned that aspect of education commonly held to be the most childish and least interesting, a phase of life relegated to nurses, mothers, and pedagogues, and felt to have little in it to command the thoughtful attention of the strong in mind or will. (p. 621)

Necessarily, then, there is an overlap between pedagogy (as upbringing) and didactics (as schooling). This has arisen from the rejection of Monroe's standpoint and, instead, the association with schooling at all levels. Two texts have been paramount in their influence: Paulo Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed (c.1970) and Basil Bernstein's 'On the classification and framing of educational knowledge', (1971); whereas in the smaller arena of the United Kingdom another influential text seems to have been Brian Simon's Why no pedagogy in England? (1981). In all these writings, pedagogy refers to a science of school education rather than life education.

Anglo-American pedagogics assumes, following Freire, that there are a plurality of pedagogies. it accepts, with Bernstein, that these different pedagogies entail different outcomes; and it recognises, with Simon, Gundem, and mainland European didacticians, that the task of an educationist - whether Handwerker or Baumeister - is to deliberate and make choices among these different codes.

A crucial feature of such forms of analysis - whether they are characterised as curricular, pedagogic or didactic - is that teaching is as much about *codes* as about *methods*. Put another way, a code is a framework for practice, not a prescription of methods - and the work of Peter McLaren (1998) provides an illustration. Elaborating the assumption that 'pedagogy must be

distinguished from teaching', he continues by quoting Roger Simon who, in his turn, echoed Basil Bernstein:

> 'pedagogy' refers to the integration in practice of particular curriculum content and design, classroom strategies and techniques, and evaluation, purposes and methods. All of these aspects of educational practice come together in the realities of what happens in classroom. Together, they organize a view of how a teacher's work within an institutional context specifies a particular version of what knowledge is of most worth, what it means to know something, and how we might construct representation of ourselves, others and our physical and social environment. (p. 165).

This, I suggest, is the same kind of analysis that is found in European didactics - something we build upon in the remainder of this paper. In the process, we focus another problematic dimension in didactic analysis; namely that there is a north-south differentiation in Europe which, incidentally, has been evident at least since the fifteenth century Reformation (see, for instance, Kusukawa 1997). Thus to focus on German didactics is not to present a European perspective - as Rudolf Künlz (as a Swiss citizen), notes in his review of German didactics (in Westbury *et al*., 1999, p. 47).

As a complement, therefore, we turn to didactic analysis in Spain.

The discourse of Didactic thinking and applications in Spain

Didactical approaches to teaching and learning have always referred, in one way or other, to a *doctrine* to be taught to students in order to make them grow and to push them to learn. The same idea of *intentional teaching* to be transmitted, comes under the influence of the State and/or any other educational institution, as they are considered in charge of taking the right decisions concerning the global aims and content of teaching.

What is clear around the development of didactics in Spain, and other southern European countries, is that, although the meaning and the sense of the word didactic comes from the ancient Greek, *didaskein* (to teach, instruct or explain), didactic teaching and school approaches have revolved around later concepts of *doctrine* and *dogma* associated with the catholic church, and around the associated *centralisation* (or *central decision taking*) in curriculum development.

That means that, in a way, didactic school applications mean to force pre-defined school aims and contents following an institutional school perspective (cf. Westbury's discussion of curriculum as manual). In this sense, teaching and learning, *didaskein* and *manthano*, appear as a cause and effect dualism while psychological approaches to Educational system organisation are considered more progressive, in that they also embody a conception of the learner. Education becomes the transmission of politically-selected knowledge with the aid of a psychological vision of what can be taught according to students' skills and capacities.

Didactic educational strategies stem from a thomist tradition. The work of St. Thomas Acquinas can be considered a precedent for what is being described here: a church educational tradition that operates a centralised vision of implementing school curriculum. And in order to set this option in a context, didactic approaches to education have always focused on a behaviouristic view of the teacher's role or a view that takes account of mentalist (cognitivist) perceptions in teaching and learning (cf. Zeichner, (1983, p. 86;

Doyle, 1977; and Gimeno & Perez,1983). That is, early Spanish didactics did not mix culturalistic, analytical - technological and mediational (constructivist) models of teaching and learning.

Instead, didactic development and thinking was narrowly related to: programmes of schooling, instruction, educational technology, teaching methodologies, school planning and educational prescription, study plans, school performance, school materials, school guidelines, school aims, resources, and so on. Reflection about school contents and the sense or the meaning of selection at school was outside these didactical approaches.

The important thing is to teach so that pupils learn what is institutionally established. To regulate educational practices without theorising about what it is prescribed or about school-level decisions and implications has been the traditional aim of didactic approaches to educational practice in Spain.

Didaktika Magna to Applied Didactics.

There has been a long journey in the evolution of Didactics from Comenius' (1971) reflections around the universal device to teach everything to all humankind, to more modern conceptions which refer to the art and science of teaching, herbartian sequences (Herbart, 1935) and their export to the US as an instructional technology (Stocker, 1964) or around teaching as a 'technique to direct and guide effectively students in their learning (Mattos,1963).

Following modern tradition, didactic as educational technology has been defined as an instrumental discipline organised under the aim of guiding, directing, training, and orchestrating learning processes. Educational aims and goals are excluded from didactical analysis. There is no interest in the inner content of what it is going to be taught. Instead, attention focuses on how teaching is going to be accomplished (Nerici, 1969: 18), with educational methodology being the key question for didactical research and practices. Didactical approaches tie purposes and efficiency to the inner history (or logic) of the knowledge transfer.

The words *techne* (to know how to do) and *artuein* (to know how to manage) forces research and practice towards the systematisation of methods and instrumental tools. Everything is organised to stimulate and direct learning towards what has been described, by Titione (1981), as a 'psycho-didactical approach'.

Didactics evolved during the 1980`s under theoretical and practical reflections in education. Didactics began to appear as a dynamic organisation based on practical and explanatory theories, or as Gimeno (1981: 34) maintained, 'educational theoretical and practical knowledge which has an standardised structure and a technological awareness'.

The same author, in Gimeno, J, and Perez, A. (1983) suggested that empirical-analytic approaches had separated theory and practice in didactic analysis. Didactic applications developed dynamic approaches to subject teaching without questioning how subject disciplines are internally built. Disciplined knowledge, therefore, was to be learned as pre-

ordained doctrine. Other approaches to educational practice were ruled out. Teachers were de-profesionalised employees expected to implement the education system's curricula[3].

Recent didactic thinking has moved towards a broader pedagogic vision which builds on the classical sense of nurturing, upbringing or training, and which also takes account of what is important for learners. In Spain, attempts are being made to build curricular analysis on earlier didactical approaches to school learning. In France *didactic transposition* has become influential. Knowledge disciplines are transposed into a learning or teaching discipline (Chevelard, 1997); whereas in Italy, current thinking focuses on a theory of complexity which relates knowledge, teaching and learning, to their mutual interaction, to global dependence, and to semiotic conception of life experiences.

Epistemological evolution in didactic analysis

Debates about science have, traditionally, ruled over debates about didactics and education. As a result, debates about science have also influenced debates about education and didactics. Thus Greek senses of to *know* as *episteme* or as *doxa*, have been subsequently been disrupted by debates about differences in the human and natural sciences, empiricism, hermeneutics, *erklären, verstehen,* and so on.

As a consequence of such debates, scientific methods were used to analyse social problems and human disciplines. The natural sciences offered a scientific approach focusing on empirical regularity, whereas the human sciences focused on meaning, and the ideological and anthropological which helped to shape such meaning. In this context, educational sciences grew in the shadow of auxiliary sciences which promoted conceptions of instructional, with clear methodological intentions related to the management of society and, later, social evolution. Science and its conception of valid knowledge arose in opposition to Metaphysics.

Didactic as a science, developed in this context, offering a model for the transmission of content knowledge which, in turn, would develop abilities, capacities, skills, attitudes, and/or the inner ruling of society. More recent changes stem from the work of Popper, Bunge (1980), Kuhn (1975), Lakatos (see Lakatos & Musgrave, 1975), Toulmin (1977) and the Frankfurt school.

Conclusion

The recent history of didactic and pedagogic thought in Europe and North America is neither simple nor linear. Semantic, geographical, historical, political and even confessional differences are involved. This paper has tried to disentangle some of those complicating factors.

The overall conclusion is that the both fields are not static. There is no point, therefore, in searching for the true *pedagogics* or *didactics*. Rather, it is worthwhile, we feel, to understand

---

[3] Didaktik analysis is sometimes seen as too classroom-based and that the broader institutional and political context should also be incorporated. In Sweden, for instance, discussions about didactics have sometimes moved towards analysis of teachers' work (pedagogisk arbete) rather than didactic analysis.

them in their historical, geographical and political contexts. There is no unique, privileged or hegemonic language. Nevertheless, there is a common language based on overlapping discourses and, wherever possible, a shared readiness to negotiate common reference points. Conferences - and especially 'round tables' - are an ideal site to explore overlapping discourses and common reference points.

We hope that our efforts foster further discussion.

References

Bernstein, B. (1971). On the classification and framing of educational knowledge. In M.F.D. Young (Ed.). Knowledge and Control: New directions for the sociology of knowledge (pp. 47-69). London: Collier-Macmillan.

Bunge, M. (1980) Epistemologia. Ciencia de la ciencia. Barcelona: Ariel.

Bunge, M. (1985) Racionalismo y realismo. Madrid: Alianza.

Chevallard, Y. (1997) La transposicion didactica. Del saber sabio al saber enseñado. Buenos Aires: Aique.

Comenius, J.A. (1896). The Great Didactic (tr. M.W. Keatinge). London: Adam and Charles Black.

Comenius, J.A. (1971) Didactica Magna. Reus: Instituto educativo.

Doyle, W. (1977) Paradigms for research on teacher effectiveness. In L. Shulman, (ed.) Review of Research in Education. Itasca, Illinois: AERA.

Freire, P. (1971). Pedagogy of the Oppressed (tr. M.B: Ramos). New York: Continuum.

Gimeno, J. (1981/85) Teoria de la enseñanza y desarrollo del curriculum. Madrid: Anaya.

Gimeno, J. Perez, A. (1983) La enseñanza. Su teoria y su practica. Madrid: Akal.

Gundem, B. B.(1998). Understanding European Didactics - an overview. University of Oslo Institute for Educational Research, Report No. 4.

Hamilton, D. (in press). The pedagogic paradox (or why no didactics in England?). Pedagogy, Culture & Society. 7.

Herbart, J.F. (1935) Pedagogia general derivada del fin de la Educacion. Madrid: Espasa y Calpe.

Kuhn, T.S. (1962/75) La estructura de las revoluicones cientificas. Madrid: Fondo de Cultura Economica.

Kusukawa, S. (1997). Vinculum concordiae: Lutheran method by Philip Melanchthon. In D.A. Di Liscia, E. Kessler & C. Methuen (eds.). Method and Order in Renaissance Philosophy of Nature: the Aristotle comentary tradition (pp. 337-354). Aldershot: Ashgate.

Lakatos, I. & Musgrove, A. (1975) La critica y el desarrollo del conocimiento. Barcelona: Grialbo.

MacLaren, P. (1998). Life in Schools: An introduction to critical pedagogy in the

foundations of education(3rd ed.). New York: Longman.

Mattos, S. (1963) Compendio de Didáctica general. Buenos Aires: Kapelusz.

Simon, B. (1981). Why no pedagogy in England? In B. Simon & W. Taylor (eds.) Education in the Eighties (pp. 124-145). London: Batsford.

Stocker, K. (1964) Principios de Didactica moderna. Buenos Aires: Kapelusz.

Titione, R. (1981) Psicodidactica. Madrid: Narcea.

Toulmin, S. (1964/77) La filosofia de la Ciencia. Buenos Aires: Miracle.

Uljens, M. (1997). School Didactics and Learning. London: Psychology Press.

Westbury, I., (1999). Teaching as a reflective practice: What might didaktik teach curriculum. In I. Westbury, I., S. Hopmann, S. & K. Riquarts, (eds.). Teaching as a reflective practice: The German didactic tradition, pp. 15-39.

Westbury, I., Hopmann, S. & Riquarts, K. (1999). Teaching as a reflective practice: The German didactic tradition. London: Lawrence Erlbaum .

Zeichner, K.M. (1983) Alternative paradigms of teacher education. Journal of Teacher Education, 34, 3-9.

Zeichner, K.M. (1986) Content and contexts: neglected elements in studies of students teaching as an occasion for learning to teach. Journal of Education for teaching , 12, 5-24.

(the end)